

✓ EXTENSION SERVICE
U.S. Dept. Agr.

✓ REPORT OF CONFERENCE OF COUNTY AGENTS WORKING
IN COUNTIES WITH LARGE URBAN POPULATIONS

Reserve

✓ Purdue University
Lafayette, Indiana
July 10 and 11, 1947

Those attending:

Illinois

C. A. Hughes
J. L. Diamond
H. R. Brunnemeyer

Cook County
Peoria County
Winnebago County

Arlington Heights
Peoria
Rockford

Indiana

C. V. Kimmell
L. E. Cutler
H. E. Abbott
E. C. Bird
A. M. Bishea
L. E. Hoffman

Allen County
Lake County
Marion County
St. Joseph County
Vanderburg County
Associate Director

Fort Wayne
Crown Point
Indianapolis
South Bend
Evansville
Lafayette

Michigan

S. H. Latourette
K. D. Bailey
E. I. Besemer
B. D. Kuhn

Genesee County
Oakland County
Wayne County
State College

Flint
Pontiac
Detroit
Lansing

Ohio

H. S. Ward
C. R. Bibbee

Cuyahoga County
Hamilton County

Cleveland
Cincinnati

Wisconsin

E. V. Ryall
S. S. Mathisen
Alex Klose

Kenosha County
Milwaukee County
Milwaukee County

Kenosha
Milwaukee
Milwaukee

U.S.D.A.

Karl Knaus

Extension Service

Washington

This report will be in two parts. The first will be a general report of what took place in the sessions; the second part will cover the recommendations of the conference.

About half of the group arrived early. A preliminary meeting was held on the evening of July 9. The chief topics of discussion were the various types of personal service being rendered urban and suburban people by county extension workers. These services include almost everything in the field of agriculture and home economics, and a lot of unrelated matters.

The general meetings were presided over by E. I. Besemer of Wayne County, Mich.

At the opening of the meeting of the entire group on Thursday morning, Karl Knaus was asked to give a background for the conference. He stated that this conference came about as a result of a desire among agents in counties with large cities to get together to study their common problems. A committee was set up in the National County Agents' Association with Mr. E. I. Besemer as chairman. The conference was authorized at the meeting of Central States directors at the time of the Land-Grant College meeting in December 1946.

Mr. Knaus further stated that this was a "time of decision" for Extension in several fields, one of the more important being whether certain phases of Extension work should be made available to urban people. They are demanding an increasing amount of the sort of educational service which Extension provides for rural people. There is ample legal basis for the work now, the limiting factors being funds and personnel.

Extension has had some experience with work in urban areas. Most outstanding were the garden programs of the depression and during the war, also information service concerning supplies of perishable food products in many areas. In 1945, there were 29 urban agents in 12 of the Northeastern States. These included 26 women, two men, and one Negro woman. Minneapolis and St. Paul have had urban home demonstration agents for many years. Milwaukee and Detroit have more recently added urban home demonstration agents to their staff. The Marketing Act of 1946 recognizes a whole list of consumer problems which require educational work. The demands upon Extension for service in urban areas are broad and include, among others, personal service on insect and garden problems, farm management problems of farm owners living in cities, better living problems centering on food supply, kitchen arrangement, home-made clothing, and the like.

At present our main problem in extension work with urban people is to get out of personal service onto an organized program basis. This conference should: (1) Consider the relative importance of this field as compared with other fields needing attention, (2) explore the opportunities for Extension work in urban and suburban areas, and (3) consider some methods especially adaptable to work with these groups.

We might start the conference by each of us telling the group of some of our more important activities with urban people. After this, it may be desirable to break the conference up into several committees to expedite making suggestions or reaching conclusions concerning a few of the more important fields of activity.

Associate Director L. E. Hoffman of Indiana, was called on for a few remarks. He pointed out that county agents serving in counties with large city populations have special problems. Their situation should be clearly determined and a course of action charted. The Extension Service will have to determine whether it will serve this field and if so how. He then turned the conference back to the county agents with a statement to the effect that "There is plenty of hay down, and we are asking you to help put it up."

There followed considerable general discussion. It was generally agreed that inasmuch as city people as well as rural people are taxed to support county extension offices, it is our responsibility to meet the needs of all of the people.

In view of the presession survey of individual problems, it was decided to find what is being done in an organized way to meet those special problems found in counties with large urban populations. Each agent present was called on to tell what he is doing in this respect.

In the discussion, it was brought out that:

1. None of the agents present sought to open up a field of service in urban and in nonfarm suburban areas. In the main, all the service rendered these people was the result of their requests.
2. To save time, attempts are being made in most of the counties to meet individual requests for service in an organized way. However, while the agents served a great many more people than previously, these efforts to solve individual problems in an organized way only created new demands for help.
3. "At present, 90 percent of our service to urban and suburban people is of a direct nature. Only 10 percent is organized."

So that as clear a picture as possible of the job being done in each county might be obtained, questions were asked during the survey of county agent experiences.

At the end of the discussion, the results were tabulated by the secretary under four headings. Committees were appointed to consider each phase of the discussion and to bring in recommendations. A general resolutions committee was also appointed.

The tabulation of the discussion minus duplications follows:

I. The Scope of Urban and Suburban Work.

All phases of the discussion could logically be considered under this heading. The following points were suggested for special consideration by this committee.

- A. Should the agent's main duties be to the rural people even to the extent of refusing to help city people?
- B. One agent had not touched the "fringe area." Why not work where you can get results easier?
- C. Are additional State and Federal funds worth the risks involved?

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II. Relationships

- A. Luncheon or service clubs. County agents commonly belong to these clubs and serve on their committees to promote agricultural projects.
- B. Chamber of commerce. Most county agents belong to and serve on committees to promote agricultural projects. In addition, opportunities are offered extension workers to inform city people as to the economic importance of agriculture. "Rural urban relations" are promoted by some Chambers of Commerce.
- C. Some agents act as the liaison man between farm groups and city people having to do with problems affecting agriculture.
- D. There are demands for special help in an organized way on other matters as was illustrated by extension worker participation in war bond and salvage drives. Some agents followed up with the urban and suburban people they work with on such programs to create an interest in agriculture and home economics.
- E. In one county, an agricultural council was formed of all groups, rural and urban, interested in agriculture.
- F. City home agents are working largely through already organized groups.
- G. Agents are working with such other organizations and individuals as women's clubs, veterans' organizations, ministerial associations, P.T.A., schools, school nurses, school superintendents, and other officials interested in promoting work in agriculture or home economics. This phase is largely youth work.

III. Consumer Education and Technical Services.

- A. Daily market programs and the efforts of city home economics workers are aimed at the problem of consumer education.
- B. One city was given help in organizing and in maintaining an extensive 4-H club program for city boys and girls.
- C. City farmers' clubs. This is a common approach to an attempt to solve individual problems in an organized way. There seems to be an effort to make the city man a better farm owner by getting him to study such matters as management, farm lay-out etc. There were also cases of the organization of operators of the farms owned by "city farmers." These groups tend to study production problems.

- D. Radio programs, news articles, and special mailing lists were used in an effort to answer the technical problems of city and suburban people.
- E. Several agents are trying to reach urban and suburban people through the garden editors of the city papers.
- F. Dealer information programs are being carried out so that the merchants may give the purchaser the correct information on the use of materials.
- G. Garden clubs have been organized to carry technical information to as many people as possible.
- H. "Bring your bugs to me." Unable to meet all the demands placed on them for personal service, most agents are asking that, where possible, urban and suburban people bring their problems to the office.
- I. The need for special help was voiced by several agents. None felt adequate to meet all of the requests being received for technical help.

IV. Special Suburban and Nonfarm Problems.

"County government must become more fit to handle suburban problems."

A. Social

- 1. Youth. One agent is attempting a job of social engineering. He had made a survey to discover
 - a. What are the interests of youth?
 - b. What do they hope to do?
 - c. What "burns them up"?

Several of the agents are working on problems of recreation. It includes everything from leader training to a complete program.

- 2. The church life of suburban groups is being neglected.
- 3. Discussion groups including representatives of all walks of life are active in some areas.

B. Part-time farmers have more questions than those who make a living by farming.

- C. Planning commissions. Some counties are doing a definite job of planning in their suburban areas on schools, population trends, drainage, water supply, sewage and waste disposal, and such other matters as may influence the life of the people.

- D. Zoning follows planning in some counties. Building regulations, lot size, and land use are the points most usually covered. In at least one county land use tax considerations are being developed to prevent taxes from forcing land out of the use for which it is zoned.
- E. County health units are being organized.
- F. One county agent holds meetings of his suburban people to get an idea as to the problems of the "fringe area."

PERSONNEL AND FUNDS FROM COUNTY SOURCES (1947)
(15 Counties with Large Urban Population)

County	Agr'l. Agents	Home Demon. Agents	4-H Club Agents	Asst. Agents	Clerks	County Funds
Cook	1	1	1	1	3	17,775
Peoria	1	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	-	2	17,178
Winnebago	1	1	1	-	3	19,000
Allen	1	2	-	1	2	12,500
Lake	1	1	-	2	2	13,380
Marion	1	1	1	2	3	19,000
St. Joseph	1	1	-	1	1	7,000
Vanderburg	1	1	-	1	2	8,000
Genesee	1	2	1	1	2	8,000
Oakland	1	1	1	1	2	8,400
Wayne	1	1	1	-	2	12,600
Cuyahoga	1	-	-	1	1	5,000
Hamilton	1	1	1	-	2	6,000
Kenosha	1	1	-	-	2	7,000
Milwaukee	1	2	-	2	3 co. 1 city	20,000

SUGGESTIONS FOR EXTENSION WORK IN AREAS
HAVING LARGE URBAN POPULATION

The experiences of the agents assembled indicates there is a rapidly increasing demand among urban and suburban people for the type of service rendered by Extension workers to rural people. Since Extension work is supported largely by public funds it has an obligation to meet these needs and demands.

I. Scope of Urban and Suburban Extension Work.

Basically, our responsibility to urban people is to offer useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture and home economics to both adult and youth and to encourage the application of the same among all people interested in these subjects.

In developing and carrying on a program with urban and suburban people, we should be concerned with those things that contribute to the welfare and advancement of agriculture or the economic aspects of home life.

We should encourage the improvement of health through better nutrition and assist the people to be wiser consumers.

Inasmuch as there are many more demands for the time of extension agents than is available in large urban areas it is highly important that efforts of workers be applied to groups rather than to individuals.

Services of extension agents can be extended to urban people without neglecting rural programs, only by the employment of additional personnel and the development of methods that apply to the type of service they demand.

Committee:

H. E. Abbott
B. D. Kuhn

C. R. Bibbee
S. S. Mathisen

II. Relations

As rural and urban people become more conscious of their interdependence, matters of relationships become of increasing importance. City groups are asking for service. Their motives are many. Some, such as chambers of commerce and service clubs, want to promote better relations with farm groups. Others, such as city farmers clubs, industrial organizations, and consumer's groups, are seeking information that will help them solve their problems. Another kind of relationship problem was indicated by those contacts, initiated by farm people, with individuals and institutions having to do with matters such as regulations and markets that involve problems for farmers.

All these matters of relationships offer opportunities for service.

Programs involving relationships with urban or suburban groups, institutions, and individuals whose activities have a bearing on rural life, and relationships with those who may be interested in carrying out agricultural and home economic programs among urban and suburban people is the job of the county agent. Administrative programs involving relationships with urban and suburban women's groups should be developed jointly by the county agent and the county home demonstration agent. The contacts in relation to, and the development of these programs for women should be carried out by the county home demonstration agent.

If additional especially trained personnel could be made available to county agents, more of their time could be devoted to relationship problems.

There is a need for more research work on rural-urban problems.

Additional training in public administration would enable county agents to improve their work in relationships.

Committee:	E. I. Besemer	H. R. Brunnemeyer
	A. M. Bishea	E. V. Ryall

III. Technical Service and Consumer Education

Since the Extension Service is supported by public funds furnished by urban and rural people and owing to the increased demand placed on the Extension Service by urban people, we believe adequate funds should be provided to employ necessary personnel to meet these demands. Only when adequate personnel is available can the Extension Service meet these increased demands.

If and when added personnel and funds are furnished, we proposed to service this new group in the urban area more efficiently by first utilizing existing organizations such as civic, social, economic, and esthetic organizations. Such organizations as garden clubs, flower clubs, home economics clubs, Parent-Teachers Associations, etc., should provide needed leadership.

1. Technical service in urban areas can be furnished most efficiently and effectively on a group basis.

- a. Individual service such as identification and control of insects, diseases of flowers, vegetables, and shrubbery, should be serviced mainly by telephone and office calls. Individuals asking for help should bring their insects and specimens to the Extension Office.

2. Consumer education should concern itself with when to buy, what to buy, and how to utilize purchases to the best advantage.

- a. We suggest that an organization of commission and produce firms and growers be called together, organized, and asked to report daily to the Extension Office the supply, quality, and budget rating of their produce. The Extension Service can then summarize these reports and give same to local newspapers and radio stations. We suggest that the news stories be placed on the women's page of the dailies and the radio reports be given to the home economics editor of the stations.

Committee: Alex Klose J. L. Diamond
 K. D. Bailey C. V. Kimmel

IV. Suburban and Nonfarm Problems

Many problems from suburban and nonfarm areas are interrelated and cannot be attacked individually. Often there are few recognized leaders, or a community of interest, among the people to provide a starting point on programs based on these problems. An approach in such communities may best be made through a study of the area in a manner similar to the land use studies. The solution to many of these problems does not lie within the province of the Extension Service. However, the extension agents may well encourage the people of such communities to discover their problems, advise them of sources of assistance, and specifically help them with those problems relating to agriculture and home economics.

These problems may be grouped under four general headings:

1. The physical group includes such problems as:
 - a. Water supply
 - b. Sewage disposal.
 - c. Selection of home site - size - soil type.
 - d. Public services - roads - lights - sidewalks - water - police and fire protection - transportation - health.
2. Political problems include among others:
 - a. Zoning.
 - b. Building codes.
 - c. Outmoded country and township governments.
 - d. Outmoded community, township and county school districts.
 - e. Inequitable tax assessment.

3. The social problems include:

- a. Lack of adequate community organizations.
- b. Lack of adequate school facilities.
- c. Lack of full-time recreational facilities.
- d. Lack of religious institutions.

4. Agricultural problems include:

- a. Lack of participation in agricultural organizations such as garden clubs, 4-H Clubs, etc.
- b. Inadapted equipment.
- c. Unavailability of heavy equipment on a community basis.
- d. Poor choice of agricultural enterprises.
- e. Inadequate use of available information.

Committee: H. S. Ward
 L. E. Cutler
 S. H. Latourette

RECOMMENDATIONS TO NORTH CENTRAL EXTENSION DIRECTORS

The conference makes the following recommendations to the Central State extension directors.

1. A conference similar in nature to this years' meeting should be held next year. It should be attended by home agents, 4-H Club agents, and representatives of Extension administration, in addition to county agricultural agents.

2. The program for such a conference should be arranged by the Federal Office of Extension based upon their experience with similar groups in other parts of the Nation.

3. It is desirable that other groups of States hold similar conferences, so that their experiences may be available to all extension workers.

4. Definite plans should be made to obtain additional finances to support urban and suburban work, to relieve the present burden placed upon the Extension staff, and to further expand the work in city and suburban areas.

5. To prevent confusion, duplication of effort and inconvenience to the public, any expansion into the urban and suburban field should be an integral part of the Cooperative Extension Service.

This conference wishes to express its appreciation to our respective State directors and to Associate Director L. E. Hoffman, and Karl Knaus, field agent of the Federal Extension Office for the excellent accommodations and arrangements of this meeting.